GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:449
ANSWERED ON:18.07.2017
Forest Areas
Nishank Dr. Ramesh Pokhriyal

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of forest areas in various States in the country;
(b) the reasons for increase/decrease in the forest area in the States during the last five years; and
(c) the names of the States where the forest areas has increased during the last three years and the target set by the Government for this purpose in the coming year?

Answer

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(DR. HARSH VARDHAN)

(a) & (b) Forest Survey of India, Dehradun a subordinate organization under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change carries out the assessment of forest cover of the country biennially and the findings are published in India State of Forest Report. As per the latest report i.e. India State of Forest Report 2015, the total forest cover of the country is 7,01,673 square kilometers which is 21.34% of the total geographical area of the country. There is a net increase of 3775 square kilometers in the forest cover of the country as compared with forest cover as per India State of Forest Report-2013. Further, the tree cover of the country is estimated to be 92,572 square kilometers which is 2.82% of the total geographical area of the country. The total forest and tree cover of the country as per India State of Forest Report-2015 is 7,94,245 square kilometers which is 24.16% of the geographical area of the country. The detailed list showing forest cover and change in forest cover States/UTs wise is given in Annexure I. The name of the States/UTs showing increase/decrease in the forest cover alongwith reasons are given in Annexure- II and Annexure-III.

(c) As per India State of Forest Report-2015, the forest cover has increased in 19 States/UTs namely, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, West Bengal, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Manipur, Odisha, Chandigarh, Daman& Diu and Puducherry. There is no state-specific target for increase in forest cover in the coming years. However, as per the National Forest Policy-1988, national goal should be to have minimum of one-third of the total land area of the country under forest or tree cover. In the hills and in mountainous regions, the aim should be to maintain two-third of the area under such cover in order to prevent erosion and land degradation and to ensure the stability of the fragile eco-system.

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